



ASSEMBLYMEMBER NICOLE PARRA

Representing the 30th Assembly District



Parra Notes

January 19, 2007

Hello Friends:

I want to start off this edition of Parra Notes by acknowledging and thanking all the individuals and organizations who worked hard to organize the Martin Luther King Breakfast in Bakersfield. It was an honor to join each and every one of you to honor the **remarkable life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King**. The festivities were highlighted by the presentation of the **“Legacy of Freedom Awards”**, which are presented to individuals dedicated to improving our community. **Congratulations to all of the recipients**, your efforts are treasured and serve as a model for all to follow.

This years recipients were:

Dr. Jacqueline Paul
Mr. Elijah Smith
Mr. Wesley Davis, III
Mr. Devon Johnson

Ms. Gwendolyn R. Johnson
Mr. Clarence Stevens
Pastor Martha L. Johnson

Mr. Joseph Coley, Jr.
Mr. Alpha Nesbitt, Jr.
Mr. Ellis Porter

I also want to thank the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast Committee for including my in such a successful event, with special thanks to **Chair Stephanie Campbell and Co-Chair Minister Wesley Crawford**.

Impact of the Freeze

As anyone who walked outside this past weekend knows, we have been experiencing record low temperatures across the State in recent days. While this cold weather sent shivers down our spines, the effects it had on the Agriculture Industry have been much more severe.

While it is hard to give a final number because damage assessment is on-going; it likely that citrus industry damage alone could approach a \$1 billion loss. The more troubling news is that this number is before the impact of job loss is measured. Victoria Bradshaw and EDD are beginning to track freeze related unemployment numbers, which will likely include many of the approximately 12,500 people employed by California's Citrus Industry.

As a result of the freeze Governor Schwarzenegger traveled to Fresno, to see first hand the citrus damage caused by the freeze. After seeing the impact on growers, many losing 70 – 80 % of their crop, the Governor issued a state of emergency in 10 counties. The list is considered tentative as more counties will be added as need develops. The Governor's declaration of a State of emergency can be reading its entirety by [clicking here](#).

I have been working with the Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, Abel Maldonado, to coordinate efforts with the

State Agencies that will be providing relief to the agricultural industry as well as the farmworkers to assist them in recovering from these devastating losses.

Today, Senator Maldonado and I held 3 press conferences to raise the public awareness of benefits that will be made available to those affected by the freeze and to introduce two pieces of legislation that will help those hit the hardest by this cold front.

ACR 12, which can be read in its entirety by [clicking here](#), will request that the PUC establish an appropriate payment deferral programs for citrus growers whose crops were destroyed as a result of the cold storms and consequent frost damage that occurred in January 2007.

There will also be a Senate Bill which has yet to be introduced the will provide additional flexibility to farmworkers adversely effected by the freeze, to earn up to \$200 per week before having their Unemployment Insurance benefits decrease. This bill will also double the amount of time these individuals can collect unemployment insurance from 13 to 26 weeks.

I would like to extend a special thank you to Assembly Members Villines, Arambula, Maze, Fuller, and Berryhill, as well as Joel Nelson of Citrus Mutual, Doug Mosebar of California Farm Bureau Federation, California Labor & Workforce Development Secretary Victoria Bradshaw, and all of the other individuals who took time from their day to join me at these crucial press conferences.

Important Notes for the Valley

- I met with the Steve Samuelian and Madera Irrigation District (MID) board member Ron Pistoressi to discuss the progress of the MID ground water banking program. I will be working with the budget chairs in order to obtain a \$15 million general fund appropriation so that this crucial project can finally break ground.
- This week I also met with Western United Dairymen who provided me with some new information on the challenges they will be facing with new regulations and the impacts of the diminished profits that will be a result of their implementation.
- On Tuesday I had a great meeting with Southern and Northern Auto Club (AAA) representatives. Their membership is over 4 million drivers in California. I was interested to hear that AAA is in the process of growing their involvement in our region, both through education and outreach but also as a major contributor to the well-being of drivers within the 30th Assembly District.
- On Wednesday I also meet with Josh Richman from Bloom Energy and Jose Carmona from Clean Power. We discussed the advancement of clean technology and fuel cells. Bloom Energy has unveiled new fuel-cell technology which runs on multiple fuels, including bio-diesel and methane, as opposed to just hydrogen. The technology was showcased in News Week Magazine back in November, and is touted as having the potential to eliminate the need for an external power supply within residential homes.

As always, thank you to everyone who stops by my office. As a reminder, next time you find yourself in Sacramento stop by my new office and say hello. My office is now located on the 5th floor in room 5155, if I'm unavailable please leave your business card with my staff and I will do my best to get in contact with you.

If you know anyone who would enjoy receiving Parra Notes please have them e mail [Michael Tamariz](#) so they can be

included in our distribution list.

LAST WEEK TO SUBMIT BILL IDEAS BEFORE IMPORTANT ASSEMBLY DEADLINE !!!

It's that time of year again. My legislative staff and I are sitting down to discuss our legislative package for the year and we are very interested in your ideas. If you would like to submit an idea for inclusion in our bill package discussions please submit your idea, along with your name, address, and phone number (for follow-up purposes only) to Brandon.Sanders@asm.ca.gov.

Meeting Requests

If you or your organization would like to set up a time to meet with me or would like for me to attend an event you are sponsoring, please feel free to contact my **Executive Secretary Anna Goddard** at (916) 319-2030 or by e-mail at Anna.Goddard@asm.ca.gov.

Interns Wanted

I am accepting applications for the internship program in my **Hanford, Bakersfield** and **Sacramento** offices. Candidates should be residents of the **30th Assembly District**, possess solid research and communication skills, and have a strong interest in public policy and political issues facing the **Central Valley**. Applications can be found by going to: <http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a30>.

For Hanford office internships contact **Richard Valle** at (559) 585-7170 or by e-mail at: Richard.Valle@asm.ca.gov.

For Bakersfield office internships contact **Nerissa Robinson** at (661) 334-3745 or by e-mail at: Nerissa.Robinson@asm.ca.gov

For Sacramento office internships contact **Brandon Sanders** at (916) 319-2030 or by e-mail at: Brandon.Sanders@asm.ca.gov.

Bakersfield Office:

601 24th St.,
Suite A
Bakersfield, CA 93301
Phone: (661) 334-3745
Fax: (661) 334-3796

Hanford Office:

321 N. Douty St.,
Suite B
Hanford, CA 93230
Phone: (559) 585-7170
Fax: (559) 585-7175

Capitol Office:

State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249
Phone: (916) 319-2030
Fax: (916) 319-2130

Email: Assemblymember.Parra@assembly.ca.gov

Web Site: <http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a30/>

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